United Nations S/2013/609

Security Council

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16 October 2013

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Letter dated 16 October 2013 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 13 October 2013 (S/2013/608) concerning your intention to appoint Ms. Sigrid Kaag (Netherlands) to the post of Special Coordinator of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Mission has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council. They take note of the intention expressed in your letter.

(*Signed*) Agshin **Mehdiyev**
President of the Security Council

13-51366 (E) 161013

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United Nations A/68/531–S/2013/610

General Assembly
Security Council

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16 October 2013

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General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda items 33 and 38

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Prevention of armed conflict

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Letter dated 15 October 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I draw your attention to the ongoing violations of the ceasefire by the armed forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan recorded for the month of September 2013 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 33 and 38, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Garen **Nazarian**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

13-51491 (E) 221013

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Annex to the letter dated 15 October 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Violations of the ceasefire by the armed forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 1-30 September 2013

1. On the borderline of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic:

   Total number of violations — 1,103

   Total number of shots – 4,920

   AK – 3,724, PK – 706, SVD – 238, DSHK – 126, RPK – 89, Black Arrow – 7, Istigall – 30:

2. On the borderline of the Republic of Armenia see table below:

   Total number of violations — 165

   Total number of shots – 3,029

   AK – 1,205, PK – 941, SVD – 140, DSHK – 551, RPK – 161, Black Arrow – 31:

No.	*Date*	*Direction*	*Time*	*Type of weapon*	*Ammunition*	*Results of violations*
1	1 September	Agarak	0900	Black Arrow	2	
2			2200		1	
3			2245		4	
4		Movses	1220	DSHK	1	
5			1240		2	
6			1300		1	
7		N. Karmiraghbyur	1630	AK	3	
8			2245		3	
9	2 September	Aygepar	0200	AK	2	
10		Agarak	2320	DSHK	20	
11				PK	10	
12		Aygedzor	2335	PK	53	
13				SVD	2	
14	3 September	Chinari	0300	AK	2	
15			0300		7	

Abbreviations: AK, Kalashnikov rifle; PK, Kalashnikov machine gun; SVD, 7.9 mm sniper weapon; DSHK, 12.7 mm machine gun; RPK, 5.45 mm machine gun; Black Arrow, 12.7 mm sniper weapon; Istigall, 14.5 mm machine gun.

No.	Date	Direction	Time	Type of weapon	Ammunition	Results of violations
16			1655	SVD	6	
17		Aygepar	1710	SVD	1	
18		Aygedzor	1750	SVD	20	
19				AK	30	
20		N. Karmiraghbyur	2355	AK	2	
21	4 September	Movses	1140	Black Arrow	6	
22			1710	DSHK	18	
23			1200	Sev Net	4	
24			1800	DSHK	105	
25		Aygepar	1150	AK	10	
26			1800	DSHK	120	
27			1800-1835	PK	130	
28				RPK	110	
29				AK	85	
30		Chinari	1510	PK	2	
31		N. Karmiraghbyur	1800-1835	DSHK	270	
32				PK	330	
33				AK	120	
34		Dovegh		SVD	5	
35	5 September	Movses	0210	PK	10	
36			0230	AK	15	
37			1735		10	
38			2310		2	
39		Chinari	1320	SVD	7	
40				PK	10	
41			1400		10	
42			1430	SVD	5	
43				PK	7	
44			1440	SVD	10	

No.	Date	Direction	Time	Type of weapon	Ammunition	Results of violations
45			1445	Black Arrow	5	
46		Baghanis	2210	AK	1	
47		Aygepar	2310		1	
48	6 September	Koti	0040	AK	2	
49		Aygepar	0945		1	
50		Movses	1525	DSHK	1	
51			1545	AK	2	
52			1250		2	
53		Chinari	2340		3	
54	7 September	Berqaber	1810	SVD	2	
55		Movses	2240	AK	4	
56		N. Karmiraghbyur	2355		3	
57		Vazashen	2000		25	
58	8 September	Movses	1920	AK	3	
59	9 September	Movses	0030	AK	7	
60		Voskevan	1430		50	
61				PK	100	
62		Dovegh	1830	AK	30	
63				DSHK	1	
64		Barekamavan		AK	30	
65		Baghanis	1850	AK	3	
66		Vazashen	2200		5	
67	10 September	Berdavan	2015	AK	8	
68		N. Karmiraghbyur	2145		3	
69	11 September	Baghanis	0020	AK	3	
70	12 September	Aygepar	0100	AK	6	
71			0105		20	
72			1750		2	
73			1950		1	

No.	Date	Direction	Time	Type of weapon	Ammunition	Results of violations
74		Agarak	2030	Black Arrow	6	
75				PK	10	
76		Vazashen	2300		30	
77	13 September	Berqaber	2020	PK	10	
78	14 September	Sevqar	1100	SVD	7	
79		Berdavan	1510		2	
80			1920		1	
81		Voskepar	2115	AK	7	
82		Aygedzor	2330		15	
83	15 September	Aygepar	0125	AK	6	
84				SVD	1	
85			1150	AK	25	
86			1430	PK	1	
87			2340	AK	45	
88		Movses	1730		6	
89			2340		3	
90		Voskepar	2020		5	
91		N. Karmiraghbyur	2340		15	
92	16 September	Movses	1300	AK	2	
93		Voskepar	1345		4	
94		Azatamut	1930	SVD	5	
95	17 September	Berqaber	0050	PK	20	
96			1055	AK	5	
97		Azatamut		PK	7	
98		Vazashen			6	
99		Berdavan	1820	SVD	4	
100	18 September	Aygepar	0110	SVD	2	
101			0330	RPK	1	

No.	*Date*	*Direction*	*Time*	*Type of weapon*	*Ammunition*	*Results of violations*
102		Movses	1500	SVD	1	
103		Berdavan	1950		2	
104			2120	AK	7	
105	19 September	Voskepar	0020	AK	3	
106			1947	SVD	7	
107				PK	13	
108			1952		8	
109		Aygedzor	0040	AK	20	
110				RPK	15	
111			0050	AK	10	
112	20 September	Kiranc	2110	AK	5	
113		Movses	2225		3	
114		Aygepar			7	
115	21 September	Berqaber	1830	DSHK	4	
116				AK	30	
117			1900		7	
118			2200		1	
119			2310	PK	7	
120		Chinari	2040	SVD	6	
121			2140		1	
122	22 September	Chinari	1020	SVD	10	
123		Kiranc	1820	SVD	2	
124				AK	5	
125	23 September	Chinari	0955	SVD	5	
126	24 September	Sarigyugh	0930	AK	6	
127		Aygedzor	1415-1445	PK	100	
128				AK	265	
129				RPK	35	
130		Movses	1520	SVD	3	

No.	Date	Direction	Time	Type of weapon	Ammunition	Results of violations
131		Bardzruni	1750	AK	45	
132			2020		15	
133			2030		15	
134		Chinari	1920		4	
135	25 September	Berqaber	0018	PK	6	
136		Barcruni	1635	AK	25	
137		Movses	1725	AK	4	
138				Black Arrow	1	
139			1745		2	
140		N. Karmiraghbyur	1845	AK	7	
141		Goghaz	2020		8	
142		Chinari	2220	PK	12	
143	26 September	Movses	1200	DSHK	2	
144			1220		3	
145		Sarigyugh	1250	SVD	7	
146		Chinari	1640		4	
147	27 September	Kiranc	0027	AK	6	
148		Barcruni	1150	SVD	3	
149			1300		3	
150		Chinari	1750	PK	9	
151	28 September	Berqaber	0130	SVD	2	
152			2040	AK	3	
153		Vazashen	2150	PK	10	
154		Agarak	2250		3	
155	29 September	Chinari	1400	PK	4	
156		Agarak	1545-1600		15	
157		Aygepar	2350	AK	12	
158	30 September	Aygepar	0010	AK	3	
159		Voskepar	0200		35	

No.	*Date*	*Direction*	*Time*	*Type of weapon*	*Ammunition*	*Results of violations*
160			1620		2	
161		Movses	1115	DSHK	3	
162		Barcruni	1830	AK	2	
163				SVD	4	
164				PK	8	
165			1920	AK	6	

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Letter dated 14 October 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to draw your attention to the recent seventh annual joint consultative meeting between members of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and members of the United Nations Security Council, held in Addis Ababa at African Union headquarters, on 8 October 2013.

During the consultative meeting, members of both Councils adopted a joint communiqué reaffirming the primary responsibility of the United Nations Security Council as the maintenance of international peace and security, along with the mandate of the Peace and Security Council to promote peace and security in Africa as provided in the African Union Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council.

With Rwanda chairing the Ad Hoc Working Group on Prevention of Conflict in Africa and as co-lead in the Addis Ababa leg of the Security Council trip, I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Eugène-Richard **Gasana**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative to the United Nations

13-51427 (E) 221013

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Annex to the letter dated 14 October 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Joint communiqué of the seventh annual joint consultative meeting between members of the Security Council of the United Nations and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union

1. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the members of the United Nations Security Council held their seventh annual joint consultative meeting at African Union headquarters, in Addis Ababa on 8 October 2013.

2. Reaffirming the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security and the mandate of the Peace and Security Council with regard to the promotion of peace and security in Africa as provided in the African Union Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council, also reaffirming the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations on the role of regional arrangements in the settlement of disputes among and within their Member States and recalling the outcomes of their previous consultative meetings, the Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council reviewed matters of common interest, in particular the conflict and crisis situations in Africa, as well as ways and means of strengthening the partnership between the two organs consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter and the relevant provisions of the Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council.

On the situation in the Great Lakes Region and the Democratic Republic of the Congo

3. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council expressed deep concern at the security and humanitarian situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, resulting from the ongoing destabilizing activities of the 23 March Movement (M23) and other armed groups, including the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda and the Allied Democratic Forces. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council strongly condemned the resumption of hostilities by M23. They further condemned the shelling of Rwandan territory and the activities of all armed groups. They demanded that these armed groups immediately cease all forms of violence and destabilizing activities, including sexual and gender-based violence, the continuing recruitment and use of children, human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council called upon all the countries of the region to fully implement their commitments under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework in dealing with armed groups.

4. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the contribution of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) to a comprehensive approach to addressing the security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The two Councils acknowledged the commitment of all troop-contributing countries to MONUSCO towards implementing the full range of responsibilities under the civilian protection mandate of the Mission, including the responsibilities

assigned to the Intervention Brigade, in line with Security Council resolution 2098 (2013). The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council further welcomed the progress made in the deployment and operationalization of the MONUSCO Intervention Brigade, as authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 2098 (2013) and supported by the Peace and Security Council. They expressed their appreciation to the troop-contributing countries for their contributions to the establishment of the Brigade.

5. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the efforts being deployed by the countries of the region and the international community to address the prevailing situation. They welcomed the signing, in Addis Ababa on 24 February 2013, of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region, and the steps taken towards its implementation. They noted with satisfaction the outcome of the second meeting of the regional oversight mechanism, which took place in New York on 23 September 2013. They urged all signatory countries to pursue and intensify their efforts towards the effective implementation of the commitments entered into under the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework. They underscored the importance of the Kampala Dialogue and noted with appreciation the call of the seventh extraordinary summit of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, held in Kampala on 5 September 2013, upon the parties to the Kampala Dialogue to bring it to a swift conclusion in line with the national, regional and international efforts to achieve durable peace.

6. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the visit undertaken in the region by the Secretary-General and the President of the World Bank and the recent joint visit undertaken by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the African Union Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, the European Union Senior Coordinator for the Great Lakes and the United States Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region. They expressed appreciation to the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and to the Southern African Development Community for their commitment and efforts.

7. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council called upon international development partners to support the countries of the region to work towards the provision of immediate peace dividends on the ground, through quick-impact projects at the local and regional levels targeting, in particular, women and youth, and through other relevant projects of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Region, aimed at strengthening regional cooperation, including deepening economic integration.

On the situation between the Sudan and South Sudan

8. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the progress made in the normalization of relations between the Sudan and South Sudan, including the outcomes of the summit meeting between the Presidents of the two countries, held in Khartoum on 3 September 2013. They urged the two countries, building on that progress, to resolutely pursue the objective of building two viable States living side by side in peace. They stressed the need for

the two countries to spare no efforts towards resolving outstanding issues, including the disputed and claimed border areas and the final status of the Abyei Area. They encouraged the two countries to finalize the determination of the centreline of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone.

9. Noting with appreciation the Peace and Security Council communiqué of 23 September 2013 and expressing their concern at the prevailing situation in the Abyei Area, the Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the commitment by the two Presidents to proceed expeditiously with the implementation of the Agreement on Temporary Arrangements for the Administration and Security of the Abyei Area of 20 June 2011, urged them to establish the Abyei Referendum Commission and appealed to all concerned to desist from any unilateral action that could heighten tension and complicate the search for a solution, as well as to ensure that the Abyei Area is a weapon-free zone. They strongly encouraged the parties to resume discussions over the Proposal of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel of 21 September 2012, in order to resolve the final status of the Abyei Area through mutually acceptable arrangements. They looked forward to the planned mission of the Peace and Security Council to Abyei and to its assessment and recommendations.

10. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council expressed concern at the situation prevailing in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States in the Sudan. Stressing once more that there is no military solution to the conflict, they called upon the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) to cease hostilities and resume negotiations in order to reach a political settlement and to extend full cooperation to the High-level Implementation Panel and the Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in their facilitation role. They called upon the Government of the Sudan and SPLM-N to facilitate safe and unhindered humanitarian access for the timely and full delivery of humanitarian aid to all civilians in urgent need of assistance, in accordance with relevant provisions of international law and the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian assistance. They further called upon them to urgently resolve all technical problems to allow the conduct of an anti-polio vaccination campaign for children.

11. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council urged the parties to internal armed conflicts of the Sudan and South Sudan, notably the prevailing situation in Jonglei State in South Sudan and the situations in Darfur and in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States in the Sudan, to seek peaceful solutions to those conflicts.

12. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council reiterated their appreciation to the African Union High-level Implementation Panel for the Sudan and South Sudan and encouraged it to actively continue to implement its mandate. They also expressed appreciation to the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan and to the relevant international partners for their support to the Implementation Panel and contribution to the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Sudan and South Sudan and the enhancement of confidence between the two countries.

13. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council expressed appreciation to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in

Darfur, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei.

On the situation in Somalia

14. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the significant progress made in Somalia since the completion of the transitional period in August 2012. They stressed the need for further progress in the dialogue and reconciliation process between Somali stakeholders aimed at developing a federal system in Somalia. In this regard, they commended the Federal Government of Somalia and the Somaliland region for their engagement, and called for its active continuation. They also commended the signing, on 28 August 2013, of an agreement by the Federal Government of Somalia and the Interim Jubba Administration, under the mediation of Ethiopia, in its capacity as Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

15. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the crucial role of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and its troop- and police-contributing countries in furthering stabilization in Somalia, thereby allowing the political process to unfold. They welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), and noted with satisfaction the close coordination of efforts and collaboration between AMISOM and UNSOM. They acknowledged the need to enhance the capacity of AMISOM and the Somali security forces, to enable them to consolidate the gains made and expand the areas under the control of the Federal Government of Somalia. In that context, they look forward to the proposals made by the joint United Nations and African Union review of AMISOM, in accordance with paragraph 19 of Security Council resolution 2093 (2013) and relevant decisions of the Peace and Security Council. They look forward to considering the report to be submitted in this respect. They commended the support provided by the United Nations, the European Union and other international partners of AMISOM and stressed the need for long-term funding for both AMISOM and the Somali national security forces, and emphasized the urgent need for new donors to come forward and support AMISOM through contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of AMISOM.

16. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council took note of the Somalia Compact, which was endorsed at the New Deal Conference co-hosted by the Federal Government of Somalia and the European Union, in Brussels on 16 September 2013, and which aims at ensuring Somali ownership and predictable, coordinated and transparent international support.

17. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the commitment of the Federal Government of Somalia to improving human rights. In that context, they expressed their concern at reports of violations of human rights. They also expressed their concern at the ongoing humanitarian crisis and emphasized the need for continued humanitarian access and assistance to millions of vulnerable Somalis.

18. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council strongly condemned the terrorist attack of 21 September 2013, in Nairobi. They underlined that the terrorist attack highlights the need for renewed efforts to address the scourge of terrorism. They reiterated their determination to continue their cooperative efforts in Somalia, in order to rid the country and the region of terrorist

and criminal groups, and bring about lasting peace, security and stability in Somalia and the region.

On the situation in the Central African Republic

19. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council expressed deep concern at the security and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic and stressed the need, as a matter of priority, to expedite efforts aimed at restoring security in the country.

20. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council underscored the primary responsibility of the authorities in the Central African Republic to maintain law and order, promote security and protect the civilian population, giving particular attention to the specific needs of women and children. They strongly condemned the continued violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by armed groups, particularly Seleka elements, as well as continued atrocities committed by the Lord's Resistance Army. They encouraged the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (AFISM-CAR), after its deployment, and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, in the context of its regular reporting to the Security Council, to report on these human rights abuses and other violations perpetrated by armed groups, in particular against children and women.

21. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the ongoing efforts towards the early deployment of AFISM-CAR. They called upon the international community to extend support to that end, to enable the African Union and the region to stabilize the situation. They stressed the importance of the work of bilateral and multilateral partners to enhance the capacity of the Central African Republic defence and security forces, as well as their support to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform processes.

22. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council commended the efforts by the Economic Community of the Central African States, by the African Union and the countries in the region in support of the ongoing transition and the restoration of constitutional order. They highlighted the critical role of the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic, co-chaired by the African Union and the Republic of Congo, in ensuring coordinated international support to the ongoing efforts in the Central African Republic. They looked forward to the next meeting of the International Contact Group.

On the situation in the Sahel

23. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the significant progress being made in stabilizing the situation in Mali, which facilitated the peaceful and successful holding of the presidential election on 28 July and 11 August 2013. They expressed their congratulations to the newly elected President of Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, and renewed their commitment to continue to support Mali, in order to consolidate the gains made and enable the country to tackle the multidimensional challenges facing it. They called on the Malian stakeholders to make renewed efforts towards the effective implementation of the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement to the Presidential Election and Inclusive Peace Talks, signed in Ouagadougou on 18 June 2013 and the promotion of an inclusive national reconciliation process.

24. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council welcomed the progress made in the deployment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), as authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 2100 (2013), and called upon the members of the international community to continue to support the Mission, bearing in mind the continued fragility of the situation in northern Mali. They stressed the need for continued close collaboration between the High Representative of the African Union for Mali and the Sahel and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Mali.

25. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council expressed concern about the security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel region and the need for a holistic approach to address the challenges at hand. They recognized that the strengthening of State institutions, inclusive economic and social development and respect for human rights and the rule of law are necessary to ensure long-term security, development and stability in the Sahel region. In that regard, they welcomed the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and the convening, on the margins of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, of a high-level meeting on the Sahel. They welcomed the holding of the United Nations conference on the cooperation on border control in the Sahel and Maghreb, in Rabat. They further welcomed the African Union-led Nouakchott Process on the enhancement of security cooperation and the operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture in the Sahelo-Sahara region, as well as the follow-up meetings that took place. They expressed support to these two processes, encouraged the holding of follow-up activities building on their conclusions and emphasized the importance of regional, interregional, and international coordination in addressing the security threats in the Sahel region. They called upon the international partners to fully support these processes.

26. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council reiterated their commitment to support the Sahel region in addressing the multifaceted challenges confronting the region in its security and socioeconomic development efforts.

Strengthening the African Union-United Nations partnership

27. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council assessed the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations with regard to the promotion and maintenance of peace and security in Africa. They welcomed the progress made so far in forging a more coherent and effective partnership between the African Union and the United Nations consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter and stressed that common and coordinated efforts undertaken by the two Councils, in matters of peace and security should be based on their respective authorities, competencies and capacities. In that respect, they noted with satisfaction the pursuit of the joint annual consultative meetings between the Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council; and the continued functioning of the mechanisms established between the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat to foster strategic partnership and operational coordination. They further noted the collaborative efforts in other conflict and crisis situations; as well as the cooperation in a number of other cross-cutting areas, including enhanced collaboration between the Peace and Security Department of the African Union Commission and the Office of the Special

Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the enhancement of the United Nations Office to the African Union.

28. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council stressed the need for continued efforts to enhance the existing partnership at both the strategic and operational levels, in order to ensure greater synergy and coherence and a more effective response to the evolving peace and security challenges facing the African continent. In that respect, they undertook to conduct necessary consultations to ensure the effective implementation of the steps agreed upon at their previous meetings. Furthermore, the Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council reiterated the need for the agenda of their annual joint consultative meetings to be agreed in advance and to include an item in such an agenda on issues that require follow-up, in line with the communiqué of the fourth annual joint consultative meeting, held in New York on 9 July 2010.

29. The Peace and Security Council and the members of the Security Council agreed to convene their eighth annual joint consultative meeting in New York in June 2014. The date of the meeting will be determined through consultations between the Chairperson of the African Union Peace and Security Council and the President of the United Nations Security Council.

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Eighteenth semi-annual report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004)

I. Background

1. The current report is my eighteenth semi-annual report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004). It reviews and assesses the process of the implementation of the resolution since my previous report on the subject was issued on 18 April 2013 (S/2013/234). It notes the continued lack of progress on key provisions of the resolution, and highlights increasing concerns threatening the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon, including challenges to efforts to uphold that country's policy of disassociation from the Syrian crisis.

2. There were serious challenges to stability in Lebanon during the reporting period and further political polarization. In its presidential statement of 10 July (S/PRST/2013/9), the Security Council reaffirmed, inter alia, the importance of preserving the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon. It commended the efforts of the President of Lebanon, Michel Sleiman, in this regard and called on Lebanese leaders across the political spectrum and Lebanese of all communities to offer every possible support to the Lebanese Armed Forces as a national and neutral institution and central pillar of the country's stability. In response to acts of terrorism during this period, the Council also issued three press statements, on 9 July (SC/11101), 15 August (SC/11095) and 23 August (SC/11055), in which Council members appealed to all Lebanese to preserve national unity in the face of attempts to undermine the country's stability, and stressed the importance for all Lebanese parties to respect the policy of disassociation of Lebanon and refrain from any involvement in the Syrian crisis, consistent with their commitment in the Baabda Declaration.

3. Lebanon witnessed devastating terrorist incidents during the reporting period. On 9 July, a car bomb exploded in Bir al Abed, a mainly Shiite suburb of Beirut, injuring 53 people and causing extensive material damage. On 15 August, a car bomb explosion in Roweiss, another mainly Shiite suburb of Beirut, killed 27 people and injured 363. An unknown group calling itself the Brigades of Aisha, claimed responsibility and threatened further attacks. On 23 August, two car bombs exploded shortly after Friday prayers outside two mosques in Tripoli, killing 26 people and injuring 825 others. I strongly condemned the incidents, stressing the

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international community's continued support to Lebanon and urging all Lebanese to remain united, rally around their State institutions and safeguard their country's security and stability.

4. The impact of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic continues to affect the security and stability of Lebanon both directly and indirectly. Cross-border firing and shelling from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon continued, and Syrian government forces were responsible for further incursions and air strikes on Lebanese territory. On 25 May, Hizbullah publicly acknowledged its role in the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. Immediately following Hassan Nasrallah's speech, on 26 May two rockets were fired from within Lebanon at the mainly Shiite southern suburbs of Beirut, causing four casualties. President Sleiman renewed his calls for all Lebanese parties to disassociate themselves from the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic and to respect the Baabda Declaration.

5. Following a serious episode of violence involving armed clashes in the southern city of Sidon on 23 and 24 June between supporters of a Salafist sheikh and the Lebanese Armed Forces, I condemned the attacks on the armed forces and stressed that all in Lebanon should fully respect the authority of the State and its institutions under the leadership of President Sleiman.

6. Since my previous report, the number of Syrian nationals fleeing to Lebanon from the violence in their country has doubled to over 800,000 refugees registered or awaiting registration in Lebanon as at 1 October. There has also been a significant increase in the influx into Lebanon of Palestinian refugees who live in the Syrian Arab Republic. Lebanon, the smallest and most vulnerable of the countries neighbouring the Syrian Arab Republic, continues to host the largest number of refugees and is facing enormous humanitarian, socioeconomic and political challenges as a consequence.

7. On 31 May, Parliament voted to extend its mandate until 20 November 2014, thereby postponing the elections scheduled for June. The Prime Minister-designate, Tammam Salam, continued his efforts to form a government. There was no resumption of the National Dialogue in the reporting period. On 2 August, a decree extended the terms of the Commander and the Chief of Staff of the Lebanese Armed Forces for two years, thereby ensuring institutional continuity in the army.

II. Implementation of resolution 1559 (2004)

8. Since Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) was adopted on 2 September 2004, several of its provisions have been implemented as highlighted in my previous reports. Presidential and parliamentary elections took place in a free and fair manner. The Syrian Arab Republic withdrew its troops and military assets from Lebanon in April 2005. Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic established full diplomatic relations in 2009.

9. President Sleiman and caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati continued to affirm during the reporting period the respect of Lebanon for all United Nations resolutions. However, the escalating crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic and its corresponding impact on Lebanon continued to limit progress in the implementation of the outstanding provisions of resolution 1559 (2004) and other Security Council resolutions pertaining to Lebanon. A rise in violence within the country and the

political stalemate that continued to characterize the reporting period made progress on resolution 1559 (2004) still more difficult, though more necessary than ever.

10. The delineation of the Syrian-Lebanese border, which was strongly encouraged by the Security Council in its resolution 1680 (2006), has still not taken place. Moreover, the existence and activities of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias continue to pose a threat to the stability of the country and the region, and highlight the need for the Government of Lebanon and the Lebanese Armed Forces to intensify their efforts to reach a full monopoly on the possession of weapons and the use of force throughout Lebanon.

11. My representatives and I have remained in regular contact with all parties in Lebanon over the reporting period, as well as with relevant regional and international leaders. I met President Sleiman and caretaker Prime Minister Mikati in New York on 25 September and 3 October respectively, on the occasion of the inaugural meeting of the International Support Group for Lebanon, which I convened. Participants in the meeting expressed appreciation for the leadership of President Sleiman in seeking to uphold the sovereignty, unity and stability of Lebanon and the continuity of State institutions, to promote dialogue and to safeguard Lebanon from the impact of the Syrian crisis.

A. Sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon

12. Resolution 1559 (2004) aims at strengthening the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon throughout the country, in line with the Taif Agreement of 1989, to which all the political parties in Lebanon committed themselves. This objective has remained the highest priority of my efforts to facilitate the implementation of all resolutions pertaining to Lebanon.

13. In its resolution 1680 (2006), the Security Council strongly encouraged the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to respond positively to the request made by the Government of Lebanon to delineate their common border. I continue to call upon the Syrian Arab Republic and Lebanon to achieve the full delineation of their common border. However, given the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, no tangible steps were taken by either side during the period towards the delineation and demarcation of the border between the two countries.

14. The delineation and demarcation of the boundaries of Lebanon remain essential elements in guaranteeing national sovereignty and territorial integrity. They also remain critical steps to facilitate proper border control. The complex security situation along the Syrian-Lebanese border in the current circumstances, including ongoing reports of cross-border fighting and movement of arms and people, further underlines the continued urgency of demarcating the border. While acknowledging the bilateral nature of border delineation, progress on this matter remains an obligation of the two countries under Security Council resolution 1680 (2006), derived from 1559 (2004).

15. From 28 April to 1 October, at least 13 cross-border shelling incidents from the Syrian Arab Republic were reported in northern Lebanon causing at least one fatality and a dozen injuries. During the same period, at least one cross-border

incursion by Syrian government forces was reported. Three rockets originating from the Syrian Arab Republic also landed in the eastern Bekaa area of Lebanon during this period. On 5 and 12 June, Syrian army helicopters fired missiles in the Arsal region of Lebanon. The Lebanese Armed Forces stated that their units in that area had taken the defensive measures necessary to react immediately to any further violation. In a letter to the Security Council on 18 June, President Sleiman protested the infringement of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon by the conflicting Syrian parties. In its presidential statement of 10 July, the Security Council underscored its growing concern at the marked increase in cross-border fire from the Syrian Arab Republic into Lebanon, which caused death and injury among the Lebanese population, as well as in incursions, abductions and arms trafficking across the Lebanese-Syrian border.

16. The continued occupation by the Israel Defense Forces of the northern part of the village of Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line stands in violation of the sovereignty of Lebanon and resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006). My representatives and I continue to engage closely with both parties, with a view to facilitating the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the area in implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

17. There has been no progress either in relation to the issue of the Shab'a Farms area. Neither the Syrian Arab Republic nor Israel has responded with regard to the provisional definition of the area contained in my report on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), issued on 30 October 2007 (S/2007/641).

18. Unmanned aerial vehicles and fixed-wing aircraft, including fighter jets, of the Israel Defense Forces continued to fly over Lebanon on an almost daily basis. These overflights are violations of Lebanese sovereignty and resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006). The Government of Lebanon has repeatedly protested these violations. I have deplored them and demanded that they cease immediately. Israeli authorities claim in turn that these overflights are carried out for security reasons.

B. Extension of control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory

19. The Government of Lebanon has reiterated to the United Nations its intention to extend State authority over all Lebanese territory, as called for by the Taif Agreement and resolution 1559 (2004). The Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces have played a crucial role in implementing this commitment, under difficult security circumstances. However, the ability of the Lebanese State to fully exercise its authority over all of its territory continues to be challenged, underlining the need for continued international support to the authorities and the Lebanese Armed Forces.

20. Several incidents have challenged domestic security. Most of the incidents are linked directly or indirectly to the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, which has exacerbated sectarian tensions. There is also heightened concern at the involvement of Lebanese fighters in the Syrian Arab Republic, notably Hizbullah, especially in the battle of Qusayr. On 20 June, President Sleiman called on Hizbullah fighters to return to Lebanon. On 1 August, he stressed that the army's duty was difficult if one or more Lebanese actors were involved in extraterritorial conflicts, thereby importing external crises.

21. The intensification of the battle for the Syrian town of Qusayr on 19 May led to a new, sustained round of violence in Tripoli between the residents of a predominantly Sunni neighbourhood and those of an adjacent Alawite area, resulting in at least 36 fatalities, including the deaths of two members of the Lebanese security forces, and over 200 people injured. The Lebanese army deployed to contain the fighting. An attack on a Lebanese Armed Forces checkpoint in the northern Beka'a valley on 28 May led to the deaths of three soldiers. In an additional attack, on 6 June, two assailants were killed when they assaulted another Lebanese Armed Forces checkpoint. At least two roadside bombs believed to be targeting members of Hizbullah exploded on 7 July near Hermel, injuring two soldiers and a civilian. Another roadside bomb exploded, on 16 July, near the Masnaa crossing into the Syrian Arab Republic, reportedly injuring two members of Hizbullah. On 11 August, the mayor of Arsal was hurt when his convoy came under fire in the town of Al Labweh.

22. On 4 August, an explosion in Daraya killed the bomber and led to the discovery of ready-to-use improvised explosive devices, maps and future targets. The Lebanese Armed Forces arrested three gunmen on 8 August who were attempting to cross the border through Arsal, confiscating weapons and a suicide vest. On 18 August, four people were arrested in connection with the discovery of a vehicle containing 250 kg of explosives in Naameh, south of Beirut. Separately, on 9 August, two Turkish pilots were kidnapped on the road from Beirut International Airport in an incident believed to be linked to the abduction of Lebanese pilgrims in the Syrian Arab Republic.

23. These violent incidents are a reflection of the widespread proliferation of weapons held by non-State actors and the significant threat such weapons pose to domestic peace and security. Efforts to increase the capabilities of the Lebanese Armed Forces and their ability to address multiple challenges, including to internal security, continued. On 15 May, the Lebanese Armed Forces introduced their capabilities development plan to representatives of troop-contributing countries and other Member States to promote the plan. Efforts continued to be made to explore, with the Lebanese Armed Forces, the possibility of establishing a coordination mechanism for achieving donor support for the capabilities development plan and the strategic dialogue, which is a separate but integral component of the plan. In its presidential statement, the Security Council encouraged increased international support to the Lebanese Armed Forces, in response to their recently launched capabilities development plan, as well as in the context of the strategic dialogue between the Lebanese Armed Forces and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). It noted the particular urgency of assistance, which would strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces' capabilities with respect to border control. On 25 September, the International Support Group for Lebanon welcomed the five-year capabilities development plan of the army and encouraged greater international support for it.

24. Over the reporting period, the situation in the area of operations of UNIFIL remained generally stable. On 7 August, four Israel Defense Forces personnel were injured in an explosion in the Labouneh area north of the Blue Line. Hizbullah claimed responsibility for the explosions. Separately, on 22 August, four rockets were fired from a site south-east of Tyre in southern Lebanon towards Israel, two of which caused material damage in Israel. The Abdallah Azzam Brigade claimed responsibility for the firing of the rockets. The Lebanese authorities condemned the

attack and its security agencies have detained two suspects. On 23 August, the Israel Defense Forces bombed a site adjacent to a base of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) at Naameh, south of Beirut, causing material damage but no casualties. Pending conclusion of these investigations, I will provide an update in the context of my reporting on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

25. With regard to the border of Lebanon with the Syrian Arab Republic, there continue to be reports of arms trafficking taking place in both directions. Several Member States have continued to express deep concern over the illegal transfer of weapons across these land borders. Israeli officials have stated that they would act to prevent advanced weapons systems from being transferred to Hizbullah from the Syrian Arab Republic. Senior representatives of Hizbullah, for their part, have maintained their position that they have no intention of acquiring chemical weapons. In this context, I noted with grave concern reports of Israeli airstrikes around Damascus on 3 and 5 May and called on all concerned to strictly abide by international law, in particular in respect of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all the countries in the region. The Lebanese authorities have indicated that the land border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic remains difficult to control but that the Lebanese Armed Forces are deployed and have sought to tighten control along the border, to the best of their ability. While the United Nations has no independent means of verifying reports of cross-border arms smuggling, I have repeatedly expressed my concerns about the risks to both countries.

26. In order to address ongoing cross-border incidents and in the context of reports of arms smuggling, there remains an urgent need to improve the management and control of the land borders of Lebanon. This is also necessary to avoid armed groups and militias in Lebanon from expanding their weapons arsenal, which constitutes a threat to domestic and regional peace. Donor coordination with the authorities on integrated border management is ongoing. I reiterated calls on all States to renew efforts to meet their obligations under Security Council resolutions to take the necessary measures to prevent the transfer of arms to groups outside the control of the Government of Lebanon.

C. Disbanding and disarmament of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias

27. In its resolution 1559 (2004), the Security Council called for the disarming and disbanding of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias. This remains a key provision of the resolution that has not yet been implemented. It reflects and reaffirms a decision to which all Lebanese committed themselves in the Taif Agreement, which led at the time to Lebanese militias, with the exception of Hizbullah, giving up their weapons. Given the current domestic context of increased sectarian tensions and the growing impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon, it is critical that this agreement be preserved and implemented by all in order to avoid the spectre of a renewed confrontation among the Lebanese.

28. Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias within the country continue to operate outside of the control of the Government in serious violation of resolution 1559 (2004). While several groups across the political spectrum in Lebanon possess weapons outside Government control, the armed component of Hizbullah is the most significant and most heavily armed Lebanese militia in the country. The

maintenance of arms by Hizbullah and other groups poses a serious challenge to the State's ability to exercise full sovereignty and authority over its territory. In addition, a number of Palestinian armed groups continue to operate in the country inside and outside the refugee camps. Furthermore, in recent months there have been unconfirmed reports of possible infiltration or presence of extremist elements in Lebanon.

29. I have repeatedly expressed my deep concern to Lebanese leaders about the serious risks these armed groups pose to the stability of the country and the region. I have urged them to address this matter without further delay, as it is their obligation to do so under Security Council resolution 1559 (2004). In a democratic State, it is a fundamental anomaly that a political party maintains its own militia. Nonetheless, Hizbullah has continued to acknowledge openly that it maintains and expands a substantial military capacity separate from that of the Lebanese State. It also claims that its arms serve as a deterrent against potential aggression from Israel. Meanwhile, Israeli officials have expressed concern at the alleged maintenance by Hizbullah of unauthorized weapons or armed personnel presence in civilian areas in the south of Lebanon.

30. During the reporting period, yet again, no tangible progress was made towards the disbanding and disarming of Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, as called for in the Taif Agreement and resolution 1559 (2004). Since the adoption of that resolution in 2004, no concrete steps have been taken to address this crucial issue, which lies at the heart of the sovereignty and the political independence of Lebanon. Nonetheless, several Lebanese groups and individuals continue to speak up against Hizbullah's maintenance of a military arsenal, which they consider to be a destabilizing factor in the country and contradictory to democracy. Many Lebanese see the continued existence of such arms, which could be used within Lebanon for political reasons, as an implicit threat.

31. I have long supported the National Dialogue as the best way to address the issue of arms and achieve the ultimate goal of no weapons or armed forces in Lebanon other than those of the Lebanese State. The National Dialogue has not resumed during the reporting period despite President Sleiman's renewed calls for its resumption.

32. In the south of Lebanon, violence erupted in the city of Sidon, where, on 23 and 24 June, armed clashes occurred between supporters of a Salafist sheikh and the Lebanese Armed Forces. The armed forces responded quickly to the attack and secured the area, but not before 16 soldiers were killed and 50 others wounded. This includes at least two soldiers killed in a related attack on army checkpoints at the entrances to the Ein el-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp outside Sidon.

33. During the period under review, the security situation in the Palestinian camps remained generally stable but tense. Leaders in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon continued to work together, and with the Lebanese authorities, to maintain order against the backdrop of the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. In a visit to Lebanon on 3 July, the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, stressed the need for Palestinians in Lebanon to disassociate themselves from the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and from any internal tensions in Lebanon.

34. Humanitarian conditions for Palestinian refugees in Lebanon remained dire, and an additional 47,000 Palestinian refugees arrived in Lebanon from the Syrian

Arab Republic. These additional refugees are placing tremendous pressure on the assistance efforts of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Moreover, tensions are increasing between the Palestine refugees who have been residing in Lebanon and those arriving from the Syrian Arab Republic, as the latter are deemed to be adding to the burden on the already limited resources available for Palestine refugees. The United Nations has continued to urge the Lebanese authorities to improve the conditions in which Palestinian refugees live in Lebanon. This should be done without prejudice to the eventual resolution of the Palestinian refugee question in the context of a comprehensive peace agreement in the region, and bearing in mind the detrimental effects of dismal living conditions on the wider security situation.

35. The presence of Palestinian armed groups outside the camps continues to challenge the ability of Lebanon to exercise full sovereignty over its territory. In spite of the decision taken in 2006 in the context of the National Dialogue and confirmed in subsequent sessions, no progress has been made with regard to dismantling the military bases of PFLP-GC and Fatah al-Intifada in the country. All but one of those bases are located along the Syrian-Lebanese border. Their presence continues to undermine Lebanese sovereignty and governmental authority and makes delineation of the border more difficult. It poses a serious challenge, given the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, to the effective control of the eastern border between Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. I have reiterated my calls to the Lebanese authorities for the implementation of earlier decisions made in the context of the National Dialogue, specifically those related to the dismantling of PFLP-GC and Fatah al-Intifada military bases, and to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate with these efforts in good faith.

III. Observations

36. I remain deeply disappointed at the lack of further tangible progress towards the implementation of the remaining provisions of resolution 1559 (2004). Lebanon continues to face serious challenges to its stability and security, both internally and along its borders with the Syrian Arab Republic, including from arms smuggling and additional influxes of refugees. I am also concerned that continued stagnation in the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) could lead to the erosion of provisions already implemented and contribute to the further deterioration of the stability of Lebanon. I reiterate my firm conviction that it is in the best interest of Lebanon and the Lebanese to make progress towards the full implementation of the resolution for the long-term stability of the country and the region.

37. The violence that has taken place in parts of Lebanon during the reporting period, including the large-scale terrorist bombings in Beirut and Tripoli, further highlights the need for renewed unity and determination across the political spectrum to prevent a slide into conflict. There should be no return to impunity in Lebanon and those responsible should be brought to justice.

38. When they voted on 31 May to extend the Parliament's mandate, members of the Lebanese Parliament cited the tense security situation. It is regrettable that agreement on a new election law did not prove possible. It is imperative, in order to build confidence and stability in Lebanon and sustain the long-standing national democratic tradition central to it, that the political parties resume efforts to agree on

arrangements for parliamentary elections. A revived sense of commitment will be needed.

39. It is self-evident that, to address the multiple challenges it faces, Lebanon requires an empowered Government. The initial unanimity among political parties with regard to the selection of Prime Minister designate Tammam Salam sent a positive signal to the people of Lebanon and the international community. I encourage the leaders of Lebanon to finalize the formation of a government without further delay. In the meantime, it is important that the President and his caretaker ministers receive support as they seek to address the most pressing issues, in particular with regard to security and humanitarian matters. It is critical that the leaders of Lebanon strengthen national institutions and the confidence of all communities in their willingness to act in a manner that protects Lebanon from the impact of the Syrian crisis and provides security and stability throughout the country.

40. The urgent formation of a government is particularly critical in the context of the humanitarian crisis. Lebanon and its people deserve the highest praise for having maintained an open door to Syrians and in most cases to Palestinian refugees fleeing the violence in the Syrian Arab Republic. The number of refugees continues to rise with economic, social and security implications that require the ongoing attention of the Government. I continue to encourage the Lebanese authorities to ensure that fully empowered institutional structures are in place to carry out effective planning, delivery and coordination responsibilities. The United Nations and the Government have worked closely together on the appeal for Lebanon contained in the new regional response plan launched on 7 June. I call upon all Governments and funds to provide assistance generously and without delay in response to the revised appeal; in particular, I look to regional donors to assist where possible.

41. I remain deeply concerned about the reports of deepening tensions within Lebanon in the context of the continued impact of the Syrian crisis on the security and political dynamics in the country. I condemn the incidents in which civilians were reported to have been killed, injured or put at risk on the Lebanese side of the border owing to the actions of the authorities of the Syrian Arab Republic. I call upon all parties, in particular the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1559 (2004).

42. I am also deeply concerned about the acknowledged increased participation in the fighting in the Syrian Arab Republic by Hizbullah and the risk of spillover in Lebanon. I call on all in the region to act responsibly and work towards lowering the tone of the rhetoric and calming tensions in the region. I am in consistent opposition to the transfer of arms and fighters from Lebanon to the Syrian Arab Republic to either side within the Syrian Arab Republic. I have repeatedly urged respect for the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries in the region. I reiterate the paramount importance of preventing a dangerous spillover of the conflict across borders. I have encouraged strict adherence to the Baabda Declaration and called on all Lebanese leaders and parties to renew their commitment to it and keep Lebanon safe from conflict.

43. Of equal concern are the threats made by external actors according to which they would bring their fight to Lebanon in response to Hizbullah's involvement and calls from inside Lebanon to engage in jihad in the Syrian Arab Republic. This poses a very real risk to national security and stability. Noting the statements of the

Security Council, I commend the efforts of President Sleiman to uphold the policy of disassociation of Lebanon, which remains essential to protecting Lebanon from any further impact of the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. I reiterate my call for all Lebanese parties to fully respect that policy, which ensures that Lebanon remains neutral with regard to external conflicts, consistent with its commitment to upholding the principles of the Baabda Declaration.

44. I have repeatedly cautioned that the widespread proliferation of weapons outside the control of the State, combined with the continued existence of heavily armed militias, undermines the security of Lebanese citizens. The maintenance by Hizbullah of sizeable, sophisticated military capabilities outside the control of the Government of Lebanon remains a matter of grave concern, particularly as it creates an atmosphere of intimidation and represents a key challenge to the safety of Lebanese civilians and to the Government monopoly on the legitimate use of force. It also puts Lebanon in violation of its obligations under resolution 1559 (2004) and constitutes a threat to peace and stability in the region. I reiterate my call on Hizbullah and all other concerned parties to not engage in any militant activity inside or outside Lebanon, consistent with the requirements of the Taif Agreement and Security Council resolution 1559 (2004).

45. I once again urge the Government of Lebanon and the Lebanese Armed Forces to take all the measures necessary to prohibit Hizbullah from acquiring weapons and building paramilitary capacities outside the authority of the State, in violation of resolution 1559 (2004). I also call upon countries in the region that maintain close ties with Hizbullah to encourage the transformation of the armed group into a solely political party and its disarmament, consistent with the requirements of the Taif Agreement and resolution 1559 (2004), in the best interest of Lebanon and regional peace and security.

46. I remain of the firm belief that the best way to address the disarmament of militias in Lebanon, in particular Hizbullah, is through a Lebanese-led cross-party political process. To this end, it is crucial that the National Dialogue, under the leadership of President Sleiman, resume, including on the draft national defence strategy presented at the most recent session, in September 2012. I also urge all parties to respect and implement earlier decisions made in the context of the National Dialogue, specifically those related to the disarmament of non-Lebanese groups and the dismantling of PFLP-GC and Fatah al-Intifada military bases. The Syrian crisis should not be used as an excuse to ignore these responsibilities, but rather serve as an incentive for the necessary disarming and disbanding of militias.

47. The situation of Palestinian refugees in the camps remains a source of deep concern, in particular in the light of the additional strains that the Syrian crisis has placed on the camps in Lebanon. In this context, I welcome the affirmation by President Abbas during his visit to Lebanon of the need for leaders in the Palestinian camps to maintain order against the backdrop of the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. I reiterate the need to improve conditions in the camps, including through legislation to ease employment of Palestinians. Such progress would not prejudice the eventual resolution of the Palestinian refugee question in the context of a comprehensive regional peace agreement. I reiterate my call on donors to support UNRWA and its vital work in providing services to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

48. I regret the absence of any progress on the border delineation and demarcation with the Syrian Arab Republic, which has a significant impact on border control. I

remain of the view that integrated border management will in the longer term contribute significantly to better control of the international borders of Lebanon and help to prevent the illegal transfer of arms to and from Lebanon. This has become even more pressing in the context of events in neighbouring Syrian Arab Republic. In this context, I welcome continued donor support for border management

49. I continue to deplore the continued violations by Israel of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, most conspicuously the flights over Lebanese territory by Israeli aircraft, including, during the present reporting period, a strike by the Israeli Defense Forces into Lebanon. I reiterate my call upon Israel to adhere to its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions and withdraw its forces from the northern part of the village of Ghajar and an adjacent area north of the Blue Line, and to cease its overflights in Lebanese airspace, which undermine the credibility of Lebanese security services and generate anxiety among the civilian population. They also greatly increase the risk of unintended consequences in an already very tense regional context.

50. Security incidents throughout Lebanon, including terrorist bombings, further highlight the fragility of the domestic environment and the need for the Lebanese authorities to intensify efforts to prevent the illegal use of weapons in the country, impose law and order, and prevent a return to impunity. These efforts remain more urgent given the political uncertainty in Lebanon and the continuing effects of the Syrian crisis. I commend the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces, which have continued to perform robustly in addressing several security challenges over the reporting period. I am also encouraged by the continued efforts of Member States to equip and train the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Internal Security Forces at a time when the security demands on Lebanon are heavy. I welcome the progress made on the five-year capacity development plan for the armed forces and the efforts made to ensure that the plan includes the requirements and objectives of the strategic dialogue. I encourage all stakeholders, including the Government of Lebanon and international donors, to be forthcoming in their support for the plan when it is finalized.

51. The multiple challenges faced by Lebanon at present, largely as a result of the Syrian crisis, are increasingly apparent. It is necessary that the spirit of cooperation and respect for the principles of coexistence and security in Lebanon prevail, as must domestic peace without intimidation by armed groups, as set out in the Taif Agreement. Unity within the Lebanese political leadership is vital to prevent the country from being drawn into regional turmoil. I commend President Sleiman's leadership in upholding national unity and the continued efforts of caretaker Prime Minister Mikati in support thereof.

52. I am encouraged by the fact that the International Support Group for Lebanon, in its inaugural meeting on 25 September, reaffirmed international unity in support of stability in Lebanon, which lies at the heart of resolution 1559 (2004) and other relevant resolutions. I welcome the calls made on the need for strong, coordinated international support for Lebanon to help it continue to withstand the multiple current challenges to its security and stability.

53. I remain firmly committed to the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) for the sake of peace and security during a particularly difficult and challenging time in Lebanon. I, therefore, count on the continued commitment of the Government to its international obligations and call on all parties and actors to fully abide by

resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006). I call on Member States to renew their efforts to support Lebanon in meeting its obligations under these resolutions, as the best way to advance the country's long-term prosperity and stability as a democratic State. I will continue my efforts towards the full implementation of these and all other Security Council resolutions pertaining to Lebanon.